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The situation in the Middle East

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Sixty-fifth year

Identical letters dated 2 February 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, and further to my letter No. 178/A/10 of 1 February 2010, I should like to inform you that Israeli enemy forces, having abducted Lebanese citizen Rabi' Muhammad Zahra on 31 January 2010 on the outskirts of the village of Kafr Shuba, took him to one of their military posts in the occupied Shab'a Farms. There, in flagrant violation of the relevant international laws, they interrogated and tortured him and subjected him to a severe beating which caused substantial scarring on his face and neck. The Israeli enemy forces released him at 0200 hours on Monday, 1 February 2010.

On the same day, the command of the Lebanese Armed Forces, Guidance Directorate, issued the following statement:

> "At 0200 hours on Monday, 1 February 2010, Lebanese citizen Rabi' Muhammad Zahra was released. He had been abducted by an Israeli enemy patrol yesterday afternoon near Mazra'at Basturah on the outskirts of Kafr Shuba. He was handed over to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) at the Naqurah crossing, and was then transferred to the Lebanese Armed Forces. While held captive, he was beaten, as can be seen from the marks on his face and neck."

Reference was also made to the fact that a joint military commission, comprising officers from the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, had, on 1 February 2010, inspected the place from which Rabi' Muhammad Zahra had been abducted by Israeli enemy forces on the previous day, which was near Mazra'at Basturah on the outskirts of Kafr Shuba. The commission requested Zahra, who had been released in the early hours of 1 February 2010, to accompany it to the place from which he had been abducted, in order to demonstrate that he had been taken from within liberated Lebanese territory. Zahra stated that the Israelis had beaten him until he lost consciousness. He was taken, bleeding heavily, to one of their posts in the occupied Shab'a Farms. When he regained consciousness, he was brutally interrogated.

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My Government considers this incident to be a serious violation of the sovereignty of my country that merits the most severe condemnation on the basis of the principles and provisions of international law and norms.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 15 and as an official document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative